



2003 ANNUAL REPORT

Visit us on the web at www.seattle.gov/parks

It's nearly impossible to encapsulate the breadth and scope of what we do in a brief report, so what follows are highlights and major accomplishments for the past year. For details and much more information on any of these topics, please visit us on the web at www.seattle.gov/parks

RECREATION

Our recreation facilities and programs are more popular than ever even as we face budget reductions. Here is a snapshot of the array of recreation opportunities we provide each year for youth, teens, adults, seniors and persons with disabilities. In 2003, we recorded 2.3 million visits to our community centers, an increase of 7 percent over 2002. Drop-in attendance at our 10 swimming pools topped 461,000 in 2003, and 25,500 children enrolled in swimming lessons. More than 5,300 kids played in our basketball leagues. We issued permits for 2,921 picnics and 160 weddings. Seattle Parks and Recreation is Seattle's leading provider of child care for youth and teens when they're not in school. In 2003, we served a total of 1,800 elementary school age kids in our before- and after-school programs and at our 33 summer day camps. We served 5,400 youth from Seattle middle schools in our Families and Education Levy-funded After School Activities Program.



Dear Friends:
Seattle's parks and recreation facilities are all about bringing families and neighbors together.

Whether it's at the play area down the street, your local community center and pool, an environmental learning center, or a regional park with old-growth trees, people of all ages gather to play, learn, and enjoy one another. That's one way we build community in our great city.

In 2003, as this report will detail, we made great progress in improving our parks and recreation system. We worked hard to continue implementation of the 1999 Community Center Levy and the 2000 Pro Parks Levy. We fulfilled a long-time community goal by purchasing the Smith Cove property in Magnolia from the U.S. Navy. We created volunteer and work opportunities for teens through summer community service and employment programs. We celebrated the centennial of the Olmsted Plan for Seattle parks and boulevards — and made progress on a 100-year-old idea, a great waterfront park at South Lake Union.

I applaud the work of the City staff, volunteers and park neighbors who help us preserve and extend our precious Olmsted legacy for future generations. Thank you for making a difference in your community and in the life of the city.

Greg Nickels
Mayor of Seattle

Our Mission

Seattle Parks and Recreation will work with all citizens to be good stewards of our environment, and to provide safe and welcoming opportunities to play, learn, contemplate and build community.



Dear Citizens:

I'm pleased to present to you a summary of Seattle Parks and Recreation programs and initiatives in 2003, surely one of our busiest years ever.

Our highest priorities have been to meet Mayor Nickels's goals of building strong families and healthy communities and keeping our neighborhoods safe.

We are accomplishing this in a number of ways. We are providing new and improved parks and community centers through projects funded by the Community Center Levy and the Pro Parks Levy. Seattle Parks and Recreation is also the city's leading provider of care of children and adolescents when they're not in school. In 2003, we continued to improve the quality of our before- and after-school programs, our summer and holiday day camps, and our teen programs.

Through care and maintenance of valuable built and natural assets, Parks offers safe and welcoming places for people of all ages to come together at our parks, community centers, pools, beaches, play areas, and playfields. Our continued focus on environmental stewardship has led to cleaner parks, reduced use of pesticides, more recycling, expanded environmental education, acquisition of new parkland, and "green" buildings that minimize environmental impact both in construction and operation. We also expanded the environmental education programs and experiences at Woodland Park Zoo and the Seattle Aquarium, with a strong emphasis on conservation.

Finally, we provide many opportunities for people to volunteer and "build community" through projects funded by the Neighborhood Matching Fund, weekend work parties to restore neighborhood parks, and recreation programs for people of all ages and interests.

We could not do what we do without the invaluable help and advice from our partner agencies and you, the citizens of Seattle. I especially want to thank the Board of Park Commissioners, the Associated Recreation Council and member advisory councils, the Seattle Parks Foundation, and the hundreds of caring volunteers whose many and varied efforts are of profound benefit to their neighborhoods and the city as a whole.

Ken Bounds
Superintendent
Seattle Parks and Recreation



SEATTLE AQUARIUM

2003 Accomplishments: Attendance continued to increase, with a total of 661,000 visitors in 2003, the highest attendance since 1980 and an 11 percent increase over the last two years.

- ◆ In May 2003, we opened our new "Life of a Drifter" exhibit, featuring dozens of moon jellies, a giant Pacific octopus, and wolf eels.
- ◆ With support from the nonprofit Seattle Aquarium Society (SEAS), the Aquarium completed an Education Strategy Plan, creating a new focus on conservation and a new mission statement: *Inspiring conservation of our marine environment.*
- ◆ In August, the Aquarium welcomed an orphaned sea otter pup named Calypso from Alaska. She had been found abandoned on a beach, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife sought a location for her rehabilitation. Calypso responded well and is growing.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

2003 Accomplishments: We launched several initiatives to improve environmental stewardship among our employees, including the switch by facility custodians to "green" cleaning products that are safer for people and the environment, a campaign to reduce wasteful idling time by our more than 500 vehicles, and increased recycling at 43 Parks facilities. Environmental education offerings continued to expand at our four environmental learning centers, the Seattle Aquarium, and 24 community centers. In 2003, we completed the new Carkeek Park Environmental Learning Center, which earned the City its first gold rating for sustainable design and construction. We substantially reduced the use of pesticides in parks.

VOLUNTEERS

Whether it's pulling English ivy, coaching a kids track team, or describing the ecosystem of a tide pool at the Seattle Aquarium, volunteers provide vital support to our programs and operations. In 2003, volunteer hours totaled **225,000**. At \$16.54 per hour (the U.S. average hourly value for volunteer time) this represents **\$3.7 million** worth of labor.

SOUTH LAKE UNION PARK

2003 Accomplishments: We developed a park design in 2003 with public input and the citizen Project Advisory Team. Funded with \$5 million from the Pro Parks Levy, the design will accommodate large public celebrations, improve public access to Lake Union, and support and enhance the maritime character of the 12-acre park. Our major partner in the park development project is the Seattle Parks Foundation, which is spearheading a fundraising effort to supplement basic project funds. The construction start date depends on fundraising.

SAND POINT MAGNUSON PARK

2003 Accomplishments: Buildings renovated: With the support of the Pro Parks and Community Center levies, we completed two long-anticipated renovations of former Navy buildings, the Recreation Center and the Community Activity Center (formerly the Brig). **Sportfields/wetland project:** We spent most of the year responding to appeals of the project's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). In October, the Park Board recommended approval of the project, and that field lights be shut off at 10 p.m. instead of the Parks standard of 11 p.m. We expect City Council review and action in 2004.



Gym at Recreation Center.



Neighbors celebrate the opening of Greenwood Park.

PRO PARKS LEVY

Seattle voters approved the \$198.2 million Pro Parks Levy in November 2000. The levy is funding acquisition and development projects, youth and senior programs, improved maintenance, expanded programs, and Woodland Park Zoo enhancements.

2003 Accomplishments

- ◆ **Acquisitions:** We preserved more than 12 acres through acquisitions and donations.
- ◆ **Development:** We completed work on 15 development projects in many city neighborhoods including Greenwood Park, Bradner Gardens shelterhouse, Hitts Hill Park, Schmitz Park, Genesee Playfield lighting, Belltown Cottages Park, and Cal Anderson Park shelterhouse. A total of 72 projects were in some phase of development or were completed.
- ◆ **Environmental Stewardship, Enhanced Maintenance:** Levy-funded work by tree and natural area crews improved our care for the urban forest and natural environment. We also continued to provide increased maintenance at parks and facilities during peak summer hours. Our park inspection program showed consistently higher ratings, i.e., cleaner parks. Levy-funded crews improved ballfields and park landscapes citywide.
- ◆ **Recreation:** In 2003, we expanded wading pool hours at 10 sites, provided 927 months of scholarship time for before- and after-school programs for elementary-school children, enrolled more than 1,200 third and fourth graders in our Learn to Swim Program, expanded programs for senior adults, and provided more than 20,000 teens with programs at our community centers.

1999 COMMUNITY CENTER LEVY PROGRAM

2003 Accomplishments: In 2003, we reached the mid-point of Community Center Levy Program, completing one of the nine community center project identified in the levy, Sand Point Community Center.

Community Center Project Updates

- ◆ Sand Point (Building 47) (\$3.1 million) – Completed.
- ◆ High Point (\$3.7 million) – Broke ground in spring 2003. Building reopened in spring 2004. Includes sustainable design and construction effort.
- ◆ International District-Chinatown (\$2.1 million) – Under construction. Building will open in 2004.
- ◆ Jefferson (\$2.5 million) – Under construction. Broke ground in fall 2003. Renovated building will be completed in spring 2004.
- ◆ Yesler (\$6.6 million) – Under construction. Broke ground in summer 2003. Building will open in early 2005. Includes sustainable design and construction.
- ◆ Northgate (\$8.2 million) – Completed “design development” phase of community center/library/park project. Construction begins in summer 2004. Includes sustainable design and construction effort.
- ◆ Southwest (\$2.3 million)– Schematic design phase. Construction begins in 2004.
- ◆ Belltown \$1.9 million) – We continue to work with the Low Income Housing Institute, which will raise funds.
- ◆ Van Asselt (\$3.9 million) – In planning phase.

Credit: Miller/Hull Partnership



Design of the Northgate CC and Library.

NEIGHBORHOOD MATCHING FUND

2003 Accomplishments: We completed 24 projects in many neighborhoods, including Eastlake, Wallingford, Queen Anne, Alki, Phinney, Mt. Baker, Madrona, Belltown, Northgate, Central Area, Georgetown, West Seattle, Eastlake, and Beacon Hill. Partners: Department of Neighborhoods, Seattle Public Utilities, Seattle Department of Transportation, Seattle City Light, King County, private foundations, and businesses such as Starbucks.

BUDGET

2003 Budgeted Expenditures and Revenues by Line of Business (000's)

EXPENDITURES

Parks and Facility Maintenance	\$39,828	36.9 %
Recreation Programming	\$30,392	28.2 %
Zoo and Aquarium	\$21,790	20.2 %
Administration	\$8,450	7.8 %
Capital Investment	\$7,451	6.9 %
Total	\$107,911	

REVENUES

General Fund Allocations	\$38,301	35.9 %
Dedicated Tax Proceeds	\$27,301	26.2 %
Fees, Charges, and Concession Revenues	\$27,726	26.0 %
Levy and Intergovernmental Sources	\$12,750	11.9 %
Total	\$107,911	

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

Under the leadership of chair Bruce Bentley, the seven members of the Board of Park Commissioners advise the Superintendent, Mayor, and City Council on key parks policies and issues. In 2003, these projects included the Northgate Community Center/Library/Park project, the Sand Point Magnuson Park fields/wetlands project, South Lake Union Park, and the West Point Settlement Agreement for Discovery Park.

SEATTLE PARKS FOUNDATION

The Foundation moved ahead on many fronts in its third year of operation. Its major project continues to be a \$15 million fundraising effort for improvements to South Lake Union Park. Among the Foundation's other major projects in 2003: donation of land for a new park in southeast Seattle, restoration of the Volunteer Park Lily Ponds and Schurman Climbing Rock in Camp Long, the Thyme Patch Park entryway, and development of Homer Harris Park.

Credits

This report was prepared by David Takami, editor, and Margarite Hargrave, graphic designer. For more information, please contact David Takami, Seattle Parks and Recreation, 206-684-8020 or david.takami@seattle.gov or visit our web site at www.seattle.gov/parks